DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 332 363 EA 023 025

AUTHOR Eiserman, William D.
TITLE Democratizing Soviet Elementary Schools through the Use of an American Curriculum: A Qualitative Evaluation.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 44p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Evaluation; *Democratic Values; Educational Change; Elementary Education; Experimental Curriculum; Foreign Countries; Humanistic Education; Individualism; *International Education; *International Educational Exchange; Pilot Projects; Political Attitudes; Self Concept
IDENTIFIERS Soviet Education; *Soviet Pedagogy; USSR (Moscow)

ABSTRACT

Positive Action, an American curriculum intended to facilitate teachers' use of positive affective and democratic elements in educational practices, was used in two Moscow schools over a 1.5 year period. A review of problems associated with the "deindividualization" of past Soviet educational practices points out the need for programs such as Positive Action that would help students and teachers improve their self-concepts. Next, Soviet/American collaboration during program implementation and the study methodology are discussed. Formative findings are explored in eight areas: (1) whether the Positive Action materials were used and how they were used; (2) the influence of the presence of the American developer; (3) translation problems; (4) realistic expectations; (5) concurrent program development and implementation; (6) concerns about the materials; (7) bridging and generalizing concepts; and (8) cross-cultural issues. Summative findings are divided into four categories: teachers' self-reports of their behavioral changes; reports of effects on children; school climate changes; and perceptions of the program's relevance to the sociopolitical context. The paper includes several direct quotes from students and teachers. Study implications are discussed, with emphasis on the need for more collaborative evaluations. (13 references) (CLA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED332363

Democratizing Soviet Elementary Schools Through the Use of an American Curriculum: A Qualitative Evaluation

William D. Eiserman

The Educational Research and Development Center

The University of West Florida

Pensacola, FL

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. Eiserman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Preparation of this article was supported in part by Positive Action Publishing.

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Grigory Dmitriyev in data collection and translation.

A paper presented at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, April, 1991.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CG023025

Democratizing Soviet Elementary Schools Through the Use of an American Curriculum: A Qualitative Evaluation

There is hardly a sphere of Soviet life which has not examined itself in light of the perestroika reforms. Schools are scrutinizing their practices and new agendas for educational reform are being set, debated, re-set, and set again. Amid the clamor of change, excitement, despair, and apathy, all of which are a part the 1990's Soviet experience, small and large collaborations between Soviet and foreign educators are being established to examine the possibilities of particular change strategies relating to the various reform issues being emphasized.

One of the most significant and enigmatic items on the agenda for educational reform has been the aim of democratizing schools (ie. creating more positive, individualized, humane learning environments conducive to creativity and which promote social responsibility and leadership). Democratization of schools in the USSR is an ambitious aim since it is an aim shared by many nations more familiar with democracy, most of which (if not all) cannot yet claim to have accomplished their goals in this area. Despite the challenges, however, *glasnost* has provided opportunities for educational experimentation in ways which were previously restrictive resulting in increasing numbers of innovative collaborations between Soviet and foreign educators.

The following is a report of a pilot project in which an American curriculum entitled Positive Action, which is intended to facilitate teachers' deliberate introduction of positive affective/democratic elements in school and classroom practices, was used in two selected

Moscow schools over a one and a half year period. The objective of this presentation is two-fold. First, this presentation will focus on what was learned formatively about the use of the Positive Action curriculum in a Soviet setting. Formative findings reflecting the administration of the program as well as the materials themselves will be discussed. Second, initial summative data reflecting the reception of this curriculum will be presented and discussed. Specifically, I will focus on four of the most salient summative findings which have guided subsequent decisions regarding the foci for future development and evaluation of this program in the USSR.

Background

"For many years, human individuality was systematically debased and suppressed under the banner of the struggle against individualism" (Kon, 1989, P.81). In fact, for many years deindividualization as a type of pedagogical ideology, which some perceive is contrary to the perestroika philosophies, was deeply integrated into the Soviet educational system. However, under perestroika the place of the individual in society has been reexamined with realignment with the original Marxist philosophy as a possible aim. The notion of re-individualization suggests that perestroika must reach beyond policy and practice into the character of individuals:

> It stands as the sine qua non of successful reform -- namely, the need for each Soviet citizen to undergo what Gorbachev describes as a 'personal perestroika,' a fundamental change in the national mood and its psychology...(Jahn, 1988, p. 15).

Soviet educators recognize that in order for perestroika to truly succeed on such an individual level, drastic changes in schools are essential.

The individual is being closely examined in light of various challenges Soviet educators are facing. Orlov (1989) lamented that the "avalanche" of pedagogical problems which has come down on Soviet society is largely the result of the dominant (deindividualized) ideology of instruction and upbringing of children in schools. Increasingly educators are being confronted with the problems of alcoholism and other substance abuse in children, and increasing numbers of children with serious depression, neuroses and psychoses, all of which are linked in one way or another with one of the most pervasive results of deindividualization in Soviet society -- the rising numbers of individuals, and specifically children, who suffer from poor self-respect (Orlov, 1989; Lynsenkova, Shatalov, Volkov, Shchetinin, Il'in, & Amonashvili, 1989). Furthermore, most recently, teachers have been confronted with the challenge of helping children understand and cope with various political upheavals which appear to jeopardize their individual futures as well as the future of the nation as a whole.

Unfortunately, teachers in the Soviet Union often are not adequately equipped to deal with the types of problems they are now facing. Most teachers, Orlov (1989) reported, have not been adequately prepared to delve into the inner world of children.

> The teachers' blindness and deafness toward the child's personality, his mistrust of it, are often at the root of his constant striving to control his students, his obsessive desire to identify himself with authoritarian roles, which leads to excessive strictness and imperiousness in teaching and upbringing, the desire of the teacher to confirm his dominating position in the eyes of his students at any price (Orlov, 1989, p.60).

In this way, the teaching process alienates the individuals, children and teachers alike, resulting in, as Orlov (1989) puts it, "no more nor less than dehumanization of instruction

and upbringing" (p. 53). This is only compounded by the equally serious problem of teachers' poor self-respect (Lynsenkova et al., 1989).

In setting new aims for Soviet education at the Second Meeting for Experimental Teachers in Moscow in which the "upbringing" process of children and democratization of schools was emphasized on the educational agenda, Lysenkova et al. stated:

> We must bring up citizens who are capable of being personally responsible for the fate of their country, personally responsible for the development of their own personality... In this inner world [of the child], which is concealed from all but is open to the educator who is attentive to the child, are concealed those human forces that our country so greatly needs, as yet undeveloped abilities, forces for good, the desire for the happiness of oneself and others. This inner world of the schoolchild, his personality, must be democratized by the school (1989, p.82-83).

In this report, Lysenkova et al. emphasized the importance of teaching "respect" as an explicit part of the formal and informal curriculum, implying a need for transforming the environment or climate of schools into one which, first and foremost, focuses on maintaining the dignity of students and teachers alike.

> By respecting the child we teach him to respect himself, and then he will respect others. The idea of respect for people cannot be instilled by words and exhortation, but only through genuine respect for the child's dignity (Lysenkova et al., 1989, p. 90).

The CPSU Central Committee Plenum (1989) and Kerr (1989) also underscored the importance of creating educational environments which modeled the qualities they hoped to develop in the children. The Plenum declared that schools must be giving children an opportunity to learn to live under conditions of increasing democracy and openness. Gorbachev himself stated in one of his speeches, "Dialogue rather than monologue -- this is the essential element in a truly creative process of education and upbringing of young

people" (Orlov, 1989, p. 56). It is, thus, imperative that all schools provide an environment of "frankness and openness, for mutual respect and cooperation between teachers and learners" (CPSU Central Committee Pienum, 1989, p. 79).

Even though the ideals and conceptualizations of the new model may be clear to some, the challenge of reshaping actual educational practices to complement perestroika is tremendous. Teachers will be carrying a heavy burden in this reform. They will have had little training in lesson design, other teaching strategies and styles, and in thinking independently as professionals. They will be required to do nothing less than transform as teachers and as individuals (Read, 1989).

Proposing a strategy for change, Orlov (1989) emphasizes four principals which may be used to organize personality-based pedagogical interaction in the Soviet Union:

1. The principle of dialogization which suggests the importance of learning activities which rely on iterative processes and in which concepts are developed and refined through the process of discussion.

2. The principle of problematization in which the teacher creates conditions for the child's independent exploration of cognitive problems.

3. The principle of personalization which relates to transcending one's roles as student or teacher.

4. The principle of individualization which maximizes the child's experience according to his/her talents, age, characteristics, abilities, skills, inclinations, etc.

Orlov cautions that despite the reasonableness of these principles, it is very difficult for many teachers to internalize these principles in their day to day teaching practices due to

their various reasons for resisting change. Furthermore, the extent to which these principles have been adequately worked out methodologically is questionable. Thus, teachers who manage to get past their personal barriers in making these changes, will likely still face enormous technical or methodological challenges. It goes without saying that, at a minimum, teachers will need training and material support in order to even start to make these shifts to a more democratic model.

In his book, Affect in the curriculum: Toward democracy, dignity, and diversity, Beane proposes a criteria for considering various strategies for introducing affect or democratic practices in schools. Beane's criteria suggests that an entire "affective" system which permeates the school is necessary in order to address goals pertaining to democratizing schools. Though he criticizes "glossy" stand-alone programs, he suggests that there is nothing intrinsically evil about packaged programs aimed at helping teachers and students more deliberately influence the nature of affect in schools provided they are used appropriately to promote, maintain, and monitor an entire democratic climate.

The development of such an effective system is the aim of an American developed curriculum entitled, Positive Action (Allred, 1986). It, in fact, might qualify as one those glossy, neatly bound, colorful curricula Beane criticizes aimed at helping children and teachers understand how to improve their self-concepts through the use of daily classroom lessons. However, reflecting at least some of Beane's ideals, Positive Action consists of two components: the daily lessons and a comprehensive school climate program. It was these dual components that interested several Soviet educators when they were first introduced to this program. (See Appendix A for a more detailed description of Positive Action).

Soviet/American Collaboration

Several members of the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, upon learning about Positive Action, noticed a potential relationship between the program's aims and objectives and many of the educational reform issues facing Soviet educators. Among other things, they were attracted to the claim that Positive Action can help teachers individualize or democratize their classrooms by providing a means for teachers and students to learn about one another in many different domains. Not long after the Soviet members were introduced to the program a collaborative project was developed between Positive Action Publishing, Co. and the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences with the initial goal of translating the kindergarten materials, training teachers, and implementing Positive Action on a trial basis in seven classes in two elementary schools in Moscow. Although the full principal's program (intended to serve as a bridge across classes) was not implemented since translation was not yet completed, principals were encouraged to participate with classes which were involved and to begin using the Positive Action concepts in their daily interactions with students and teachers.

After having implemented the program for one and a half years, the two sides of the collaboration decided they wanted to conduct a preliminary evaluation in order to determine the extent to which they had achieved the above goals, what improvements in the process could be made, and to describe the reception given the program by teachers, students, parents and administrators. The remainder of this report summarizes the methods and results of this preliminary evaluation study.

Methods

Prior to this study, I had been conducting small evaluations of the use of Positive Action for about a year and a half. During that time I had met Dr. Allred, the developer of Positive Action, and had learned about the Positive Action/Soviet collaboration. On one occasion I was asked to accompany Dr. Allred to the Soviet Union to provide initial consultation regarding future research and evaluation plans, although most of that visit was spent familiarizing ourselves with schools, personnel, and the logistics of collaboration. After that, my involvement was very minimal, giving only occasional state-side consultation up until the time I was contacted with their request that I conduct this preliminary evaluation in Moscow.

It was determined that while a goal-free evaluation would have had its advantages, the various constraints of this project (mainly time) suggested the need for an evaluation conducted by someone already familiar with Positive Action and how to evaluate its use. In defining their evaluation needs, the two sides of the collaboration made it clear that I would be working under a number of constraints. First of all, I had only 7 days to collect the data which they hoped would be largely based on interviews with teachers, children, parents, and principals. Second, while I would be able to prepare some protocols in advance, there was no way to be sure of the extent to which I would be able to control how the interviews occurred. Evaluation was a new process for those participating and it was difficult to anticipate how they would respond. Third, since I was not proficient in Russian, a translator was necessary. I was not sure how the respondents would feel about having an additional outsider hear their responses and the extent to which this presence may further influence the

results I would get. Additionally, I was unsure about whether accurate translations would be given or if there was any possibility for biased or inaccurate translations. Fourth, I was unsure about whether the participants in the evaluation understood the concept of evaluation and whether I would be able to give them sufficient information regarding this so that they would feel comfortable participating in the process and, if they did, if they would be giving me the most useful information they had. Fifth, since this program was being used in the midst of major socio-political changes, I was unsure whether I would be able to adequately isolate it as the evaluand.

All of these issues, plus literally lists and lists of other questions and concerns regarding methodology and program implementation were packed along with my bags as I went to the Soviet Union to learn as much as I could about the process and results of this collaboration in the time I was allotted. In the remainder of this report, I will share what I consider to be the most important findings which may help others in similar collaborations.

Setting

Two city schools in Moscow, hereafter referred to as Schools A and B, hosted the year and half pilot implementation of Positive Action. Both schools represented a cross-section of socio-economic backgrounds. School A's facility was about 50 years old and was furnished with wooden tables and desks many of which had been in the school since it was first built. Though each room had large windows, most windows provided views of nearby buildings which somewhat limited the sunlight that was cast into the classrooms. Being in the heart of Moscow only several kilometers from Red Square, School A had students from diverse backgrounds; some whose parents were "blue collar" laborers, some of whom were

government officials, and others from a variety of "middle class" backgrounds. In School A three classes, each with 27-30 children, had been using the kindergarten program (two of which had used it for a year and half, while one had been using it for only one year).

School B, although also in Moscow, was on the outskirts of the city. Its facility was considerably more modern than School A's, was furnished with more recently designed desks and tables, was more colorful, better lit than School A, and each classroom seemed roomier than those in School A. The population attending School B came mainly from an enormous housing complex nearby the school in which were housed many government employees. This school had a wider representation of students from ethnic minorities within the Soviet Union (most of whom were the children of government officials on assignment in Moscow). Thus, the socio-economic status of School B was slightly higher than that of School A. In School B four classes, each with 25-30 children, had been using the program. Two classes had used it for a year and a half, while two others had been using it only during the year of the evaluation.

In School A a total of six children were interviewed one-on-one by the evaluator. These interviews lasted approximately 40 - 50 minutes each and were conducted in the principal's office. Children smiled and laughed as they were seated in the principal's chair during these interviews. This behavior was taken as evidence that children did not perceive the principals office as a frightening place where they were to be inhibited and that conducting the interviews there did not appear to seriously impact the children's ability to answer questions.

In addition to these six, one-on-one child interviews, three class interviews were conducted. Class interviews consisted of the evaluator standing before the entire class and asking specific questions about concepts from the Positive Action curriculum to which students raised their hands and gave their responses. The purpose of the class interviews was mainly to get a general "feel" for the children's abilities to respond to spontaneous invitation to use the concepts and vocabulary they supposedly had been learning in Positive Action.

Also in School A, two of the teachers who had been using Positive Action for a year and a half and another teacher who had been using the program for just one year were interviewed and observed using the Positive Action materials. The interviews were conducted in the principal's offices and lasted approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. Observations consisted of approximately 1 hour each.

The principal of School A was also interviewed on two separate occasions during the visit. These interviews lasted approximately 1 hour each and were conducted in her office. Additionally, two parents (one mother and one grandmother of two separate children in the school) came to the school to be interviewed upon the request of the principal. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes and were conducted in the school's historical museum room. During the observations and interviews photos, videos, and audio recordings were obtained. These recordings represented the bulk of the data collected during this evaluation although the photos and video were also rich sources of information regarding the implementation and initial effectiveness of their use of the Positive Action program.

In School B a total of 4 children were interviewed on a one-on-one basis. Child interviews which were conducted in the deputy principal;s office in School B were limited

into order for the evaluator to spend more time interviewing parents. As with School A, the children appeared to be relaxed in this environment. The 4 one-on-one interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes each and were conducted on consecutive days. In addition to the one-on-one interviews, three class interviews were conducted in School B in the same fashion as was described for School A.

The interviews of the two teachers in School B who had been using Positive Action for a year and a half lasted approximately 2 and 1/2 hours each. The interview with the two other teachers were conducted simultaneously over a lunch meeting which lasted approximately two hours.

Three observations of Positive Action lessons were made in School B, two of which included the teachers who had been using the program for a year and a half and one with the kindergarten teacher who had only used the program for a year.

Nine mothers assembled at the school and were interviewed in a group fashion lasting approximately two hours and in individual one-on-one interviews following the group session. The group interviews consisted of each of the parents giving an independent report which was followed by an open discussion of their observations about the program. They also provided suggestions for appropriate implementation of the program in the future as well as observations regarding the initial effectiveness of the program.

The evaluation activities at School B resulted in approximately 4, 1 hour audio recordings of interviews and incidental observation comments. Additional photos, videos, and audio recordings were taken to supplement these data.

All translations between the evaluator and participants was done by a scholar from the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences who was not officially associated with the collaboration but whose interest in Positive Action was purely "academic". At School B, the Deputy Principal spoke English and participated in the translation as a shadow translator to reduce the possibility of biased or inaccurate translations.

Results

Much of the data that was collected in this study was of a formative nature and, consequently, was intended specifically for those facilitating the collaboration from each side. There are, however, several formative results which others may find useful in light of similar collaborations with which they may be involved. These will be presented here. Following a discussion of these formative results, the initial summative findings will be summarized.

Formative Findings

The formative data can be divided into two categories: those data pertaining to the administration of the collaborative project, and those data pertaining to the curriculum itself. All of the respondents contributed formative feedback in both areas.

Administrative Concerns

The first formative question addressed was, "Was the program used and, if so, how was it used?" Data addressing this question is helpful in setting the context in which other data can be discussed. Observations and interviews indicated that at both schools translated Positive Action materials were received and used at the rate at which they were received (usually at a rate of three to four lessons per week) during the first hour of the school day. Because the translation process was concurrent with the use of the materials, teachers

explained that lessons were delivered as the translations were completed. At one point the translator made significant progress providing materials at a faster rate than the teachers were able to use them (which allowed the teachers a valuable chance to look ahead). Later, however, the translation lagged, resulting in a one month period, mid-year, when teachers did not have materials. Consequently, at the time of the evaluation, teachers reported that they were approximately one-month from completing all of the lessons for the year.

No records were kept on the daily use of the program, which would have been helpful to verify the intensity and consistency of the use of the program throughout the year. However, observations of the classrooms themselves indicated that Positive Action was and had been in use for some time. There were large Positive Action posters in all of the rooms, each room had mobiles hanging from the ceiling which the children had made (an art project suggested in the materials) and each room had a Positive Action ICU box as well (a box in which children placed notes or pictures they had drawn about the positive things they saw each other doing). Additionally, each child had a Positive Action "All About Me" book on his/her desk which they had made. A random selection of at least 5 of the "All About Me" books in each class were examined. In each of these books there were numerous completed activity sheets, child art work including pictures of Positron, Picks-It, Nix-it, and other Positive Action characters, and other evidence that they had been participating in Positive Action activities throughout the year.

In addition to the physical evidence found in the classrooms, teachers, students, principals and parents who were interviewed indicated at least a basic understanding of the concepts presented throughout the program and used the concepts incidentally in their

vocabulary. While some concepts were better articulated than others (and will be discussed more with the summative results) this comprehensive level of understanding of the program could not have likely been derived by any other means than using the program throughout the year.

The two principals' involvement in Positive Action was minimal in both schools, although this was expected since school-wide implementation and the principal's materials were not prepared for use at this stage. However, both principals (as well as their deputies) reported having spent considerable time observing the teachers using the materials and acquainting themselves with the concepts. Both principals reported integrating their new knowledge and insights into their interactions with children and teachers and reported that they were examining other ways of building the concepts into the system of the school.

There was some indication of parent involvement, especially in School B. In one class at School B, six mothers had arranged special after-school Positive Action groups of 5 children each which met for special Positive Action activities approximately one time per week throughout the year.

Thus, **it appeared that Positive Action lessons were used quite faithfully during the first year, although with some delays due to translation and delays in giving the lessons to teachers.** The implication of these findings was that with very minimal training, provision of materials, and occasional visits for collaborators, teachers and even some parents became committed to actively using this new program.

Presence of the American developer. It didn't take more than a few minutes in the schools to realize that the developer of the curriculum had won the admiration of many of the

teachers, children, staff, and parents in both of the schools. Positive Action was not perceived as an authorless curriculum as so many educational materials are perceived by teachers and students alike. The developer's personality was closely associated with the curriculum and seemed to have played a significant role in facilitating the adoption of the program in the two schools. The developer had only visited the schools briefly (for a single day, at each school once in the early fall of the evaluation year), although repeatedly (approximately 4 times) during the previous year.

During my earlier consultation visit to the Soviet Union, I observed several of the developer's demonstration lessons in the schools and witnessed the friendly rapport between her and the teachers, administrators, and children. Inquiring with the teachers and administrators regarding the influence of the developer's presence, each one concluded that her presence had been very motivating to them and to their children. "She has become a model for us, since we don't have any other way of knowing how to make these changes," one teacher explained. The Principal at School B stated,

> "Without her, many of us wouldn't have been courageous enough to try this. But Carol [the developer] has held our hand through this. She motivated us by spending time with us, and most important of all, has helped us understand these concepts and how to use them in the classroom. We couldn't have done it without her."

Realizing that as increasing numbers of schools adopt the program, the developer cannot be working personally with each school and teacher, these findings suggested the need to examine the impact of her presence on adoption by eliminating personal visits to new schools adopting the program in subsequent years. Further, alternative training and support strategies would need to be developed since the teachers and administrators claimed that they

gained so much from the developer's personal contact. **It is important to note that any initial results of implementing this program must, at least in part, be attributed to the developer's personal contact (relatively minimal, though it was) with teachers, administrators, children and parents over the year and a half period.**

Translation problems. Despite the many positive comments about the developer's time spent in the schools, there were several suggestions regarding how the training/demonstration sessions could be improved. The main recommendation regarded translation during demonstration lessons. Since one of the Soviet psychologists working on the project was a proficient English speaker, she accompanied the developer to the schools and served as the translator during the developer's demonstration lessons and informal interactions with the children and teachers. Teachers reported that the translator was using such sophisticated language that, at first, they wondered if it had been an accurate translation. After becoming better acquainted with the program and talking about this amongst themselves, the teachers decided that the translations had been conceptually accurate, but that the translator's selection of words had not been appropriate for such young children. One teacher explained,

> "For a short time, we [speaking for herself and the other teachers in her school] were under the impression that Positive Action was supposed to help us speak to our children in that way. We soon realized that this wasn't the case."

The teachers concluded that, for training purposes, it would have been more helpful to have had a translator who was already familiar with the specific lesson that the developer was going to present, and who had already carefully selected the words so they were appropriate for this age children. "Translating for children is a difficult

process," one teacher clarified. Another teacher reported that while they benefitted from the developer's demonstration lessons, they felt that it would have been more instructive to them and to their children (as a model) if it had been presented in Russian by an actual Soviet teacher. She claimed that the translation process interrupted the flow of instruction they were trying to learn about.

Thus, in light of the need for alternative means for providing training and support, these findings suggest that **employing the teachers as active participants in training and support of other teachers may be both an effective and efficient strategy to explore once teachers are experienced enough to participate in this way. Further, this would be perceived as a way of enhancing the democratic nature of a collaboration between outsiders and school personnel -- an important area for consideration.**

Realistic expectations. Giving teachers and administrators appropriate expectations of the program prior to use was noted by the developer and the Soviet collaborators as one of their administrative challenges. The developer explained that in preparing teachers they focused primarily on the process of using the program. Focusing the teachers and administrators expectations on the process seems to have been important, though challenging since they were accustomed to examining "outputs". One teacher said that it was helpful to use the metacognitive process (THOUGHTS, ACTIONS, and FEELINGS, see Appendix A) as she tried the new approaches associated with the curriculum and evaluated herself (not her students) in light of these approaches. In addition to encouragement to focus on process rather than the effects of their teaching, one teacher recommended that **teachers needed to**

be given additional training to evaluate themselves, their teaching processes, and the climate of their classrooms.

Concurrent program development/program implementation. It seemed that with the newly opened door for innovation, getting involved in the schools as quickly as possible was imperative. The developer explained that they did not want to take a lot of time to work out every last detail on paper, only to find that the door was suddenly closed and that they had lost the opportunity to get into the schools. Thus, it was decided that since there was no way of knowing how long there would be such an opportunity to work freely in the schools, they would translate the curriculum lesson by lesson, giving the translated lessons to the teachers as they were completed.

Problems associated with keeping this concurrent translation/use process in balance have already been alluded to. It should also be noted that despite the reasonableness of the collaborators' eagerness to get involved with the schools, the concurrent translation/use process made it rather difficult for the teachers and students to conceptualize the program. Teachers in both schools expressed a need to have more of a sense of their instructional "destiny". By receiving lessons one at a time, not only was their holistic understanding of Positive Action limited, they reported having difficulty seeing how one lesson led to the next. This need for a holistic vision (which corroborates with most instructional theory and, in fact, is manifested in the Positive Action program in its entirety) was perceived as an absolute imperative to using this program well, despite any success they reported having with the program without it.

It was concluded that if a concurrent process of translation and use would be necessary in the future (for example, when adapting materials for other grade levels), additional support and training should be provided to enhance their understanding of their overall objectives periodically throughout the year.

Concerns about the Materials Themselves

All of the respondents, but especially the teachers and children, provided numerous suggestions for how to improve the curriculum. It was apparent that having never had an opportunity to participate in an evaluation, they were very contentious about offering their suggestions. While it is beyond the scope and relevance of this report to detail their many suggestions, I will highlight several which seem to have implications for others who may collaborate with Soviet schools in the future.

Bridging and generalizing concepts. One of the common themes underlying many of the observations and suggestions made by teachers, children, administrators, and parents regarding the curriculum was the need for more assistance with bridging the concepts one with the other, and generalizing to a wider variety of applications. Just as Read (1989) forewarned, teachers have had little preparation for generalizing new teaching strategies and need extra assistance. Many of the Positive Action lessons include a suggested script with questions teachers can use to debrief the stories with the children. These are intended as a stimulus for discussion which carries on beyond those questions. However, teachers reported that they didn't know what to do once they have completed the list of questions which were provided. One teacher explained,

> "I had a feeling there was more we could talk about, but I wasn't sure how to ask the children nor how to keep them talking. Sometimes they did the asking

> and I didn't have any problem. Sometimes they seemed to understand how to do it. I was the one with the problem in knowing how to expand on the lessons."

This teacher and several others suggested that more training and prompts for stimulating and facilitating discussions would be helpful.

Several teachers and 3 children suggested the need for a lesson both at the beginning and the end of the day. They said that by ending the day with Positive Action just as they started it, they would be better able to generalize the concepts outside of the classroom. Further, it would help them bridge one day and one lesson to the next so that they would be more likely to build a complete environment around these concepts.

Four children suggested that their teachers needed ideas for how to use Positive Action in other subjects they were learning. One especially articulate child stated,

> "I think the happy circle [the metacognitive process, (see Appendix A)] helps me in mathematics. It would be good if my teacher could show me how to use it in all of my subjects."

Also discussing possible material supplements, every parent who was interviewed said they wanted more materials for how to use the Positive Action concepts at home. They had some materials for parents which accompany Positive Action and the children were teaching them some of the concepts, but parents indicated that it would have been helpful to have more so that they could all be learning the concepts together and creating the same kind of environment at home as the child had at school.

Cross Cultural Issues. It was found that those using the program did not want the program "sovietized" so that it no longer looked or sounded American. They liked that quality in the program since it was subtle and did not interrupt the flow of the lessons. They

said that it provided a basis for introducing the topic of culture, differences, and for incidental learning about American life. They suggested, however, that attention be given to identifying those elements of the stories and examples which might not be commonly understood. Several teachers referred to a lesson in which Halloween was treated. Rather than change the content of the stories, they preferred to have a brief explanation of the meaning of the event which might not be understood. In addition to their suggestions, it was concluded that in the next phases of the collaboration, serious attention should be given to the translation so that the language that is used is colorful and vivid, and conceptually appropriate.

Summative Findings

Summative findings were divided into four categories: teachers' self reports of their behavioral changes, reports of effects on children, school climate changes, and perceptions of the program's relevance to the socio-political context.

Teachers' Self Reports of Behavioral Change

The interview data regarding teachers', parents', and students' perceived behavioral changes (positive or negative) indicated that their responses were very individualized -- each person claiming to have been influenced in a unique way (making it difficult to make a generalized conclusion about the perceived effects of using the program). The most common concepts identified and discussed during interviews were: responsibility, self-concept, being kind to others, self-honesty, helping others, empathy, thankfulness, and being positive.

Three of the teachers explicitly noted that waiting and thinking about a problem and then acting (a Positive Action concept) had improved their effectiveness in the classroom. One explained,

> "In the past, I reacted to problems very quickly. In fact, I thought that was the sign of being a good teacher; to have my reprimand already voiced before the child had even completed his behavior. But now I have learned to wait a moment to find at least two, if not more, choices for how to deal with the situation before I respond. I don't always do this, but by trying to do this, I am learning about other options which I completely ignored in the past."

Teachers consistently indicated that their problem solving abilities were enhanced by reminding themselves of the "seeing the good in others" concept from Positive Action. One teacher described,

> "Sometimes it is frustrating when a child doesn't do the specific thing you are trying to get him to do. It is so easy to overlook all of the good things they are or can be doing in those moments and focus on what they can't do. Positive Action has been a good reminder to look for the positive things they do and to use those things as the basis for my instruction in other areas. Its a place to build new skills and knowledge and I feel much better about it too."

All of the teachers who were in their second year of using Positive Action corroborated with both of the above examples, indicating that they had gained a new appreciation for their children's perspectives and were willing to take more time to elicit and understand these perspectives. One of the teachers reflected,

> "I have learned to take time to listen to them. It has been enlightening to see that there have been times when their perspectives were more helpful than mine. ...To think that before I just squelched this!"

Additionally, each of the teachers in their second year of using Positive Action reported that using the Positive Action concepts (within and outside of the context of the

Positive Action lessons) provided a means for letting the children know more about them. One teacher described:

> "We have had a very rigid distinction between the teacher and student roles. Positive Action has helped my children see that I don't have all the answers. Once this becomes clear, then we can all start learning together. I shiver when I think of all the learning that hasn't occurred because I wasn't able to show the children my weaknesses in the past."

Another teacher reported,

> "In the context of Positive Action lessons, I have told my children about problems I sometimes have with my son. They have given me advice; good advice!"

Early in the interviewing process at School A the teachers informed me that there was one teacher who had only been using the program for that year whose perceptions of the program were not as positive as their's. They wanted me to "be sure to interview and observe her." They claimed that they wanted to know if it was possible that Positive Action was not appropriate for every teacher and, if so, how they could identify those teachers. The fact that I was directed toward this teacher so quickly was taken as a sign that the teachers wanted to present multiple, honest perspectives of their experience using Positive Action. Further, this behavior of the school staff may be an example of a democratic behavior they developed in which others' views were given a voice and a chance to be understood.

Subsequently, I interviewed and observed this teacher giving a Positive Action lesson. This teacher openly admitted that she was not as convinced as the others about the value of Positive Action. She admitted that she was not totally convinced that giving up her "previous" authoritarian style was good, despite the increasing pressure to become more democratic.

> "I've been struggling with this because I am not sure whether a non-authoritarian approach is best for schools. Sometimes children need authority. I'm still in the midst of deciding, but right now I am entertaining the idea that maybe I have been wrong all along. This is a very difficult thing for me to admit. Very difficult... ...When you have been a certain way for many years, the new way, no matter how beautiful and effective, seems like a terrifying burden to take upon yourself. This has been my struggle."

Based on her comments, I asked the other teachers if they felt that using Positive Action concepts meant that they no longer had control or any authority in their classrooms. All of the teachers said "no", but that they were still learning how to find that balance. When I asked this of the teacher who was still struggling she responded, "I don't know. Maybe that's my problem. Maybe I keep thinking I have to give up all of my control instead of just shift some of it."

Thus, the overall satisfaction of teachers' was very positive. All of the teachers (with the exception of the one mentioned above) identified specific incidences in which they used Positive Action concepts to change their approach in the classroom, although they each admitted to not fully understanding how the program will ultimately be working for them and what its potential was.

Perceptions of Effects on Children's Behavior

During class interviews, class members were very anxious to give their ideas; usually 15-20 hands were in the air indicating their desire to answer my questions pertaining to Positive Action concepts. Both the one-on-one and class interviews demonstrated the children's abilities to discuss the concepts of "helping others", "empathy", "thankfulness", "being kind to others", and "honesty", giving examples of how they used these concepts to help them "turn problems into opportunities." Most of the children, however, did not

indicate profound generalizations of the concepts in their behavioral self-reports. Most of the children's self-reports of behavior change were quite general and pertained to helping old people which is a direct reflection from a Positive Action lesson on being kind to others. Though not a typical response to my question regarding how Positive Action concepts have been used, one of the more remarkable comments was made by a girl in School A:

> "Sometimes my mother becomes angry with me when I don't do all of my chores. I used to cry when she would get angry with me. But Positive Action helps me to stop and think about it. 'Is my mother right?' I feel empathy because, when I think about her life, she has many things to do and needs my help."

Parents and teachers indicated that they had noticed "valuable" behavioral changes in their children which they attributed, at least in part, to Positive Action. Each parent provided examples which demonstrated that each parent perceived a very individualized effect on their child including children's increased verbalization of positive observations made of their siblings and parents, decline in sibling and peer physical conflicts, increased helpfulness around the house, improved attitude toward school, increased desire to learn new things, and an ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses. One of the most pervasive effects parents indicated was that their children were incidentally using new vocabulary and concepts when they spoke which were derived from Positive Action. This suggests the development of what they referred to as a "new ability" to talk about problems they previously could not talk through. Most commonly referred to were the Russian terms for "self-concept", "the happy circle", "empathy", "looking for the good in others" and "seeing your strengths and weaknesses."

Classroom Climate Changes

The combination of perceived effects on teachers and children seemed to have culminated in a perceived change in classroom climate. Teachers and principals reported that Positive Action helped teachers to begin to set aside their authoritarian model of teaching and embrace a more democratic style. Regarding this shift in teaching style, one teacher expressed,

> "I have stopped committing the crime of suppression on my children. I think (I hope) I have become a better listener and that I actually let the children make more choices about the way things function in our classroom."

One of the teachers discussed the change in her classroom climate.

> "I think Positive Action has helped me find a way for the children to feel like they don't always have to be right. The important thing is that everyone has a chance to find their ideas. We are no longer in pursuit of that one golden answer in everything we do, like we have for so many years. Its been surprising to me to see how much more learning occurs when I stop being so concerned about the right answer and become more concerned with the individual progress of each child and the process of learning. Before, I didn't think that would make any sense, but now its the only sensible way to teach."

My observations of Positive Action lessons allowed me an initial opportunity to experience the classroom climate. During the Positive Action lessons there was a high level of excitement displayed by teachers and children. There were numerous observations during which children were so engrossed in the class discussions that they no longer stayed seated (see Figure 1). The teachers were thronged with questions; "ooo's" and "ahs" calling for a chance to express their ideas and waving hands pleading for an opportunity to ask a question. This was perceived by all participants as a result of using Positive Action. The teacher's faces were frequently inquisitive and highly expressive, and their voices were engaging with expressive intonation as they told stories. It is important to note, though, the minimal time

of my observations. While I did not intend to systematically make comparisons between these observations and my previous visit, I could not help but recognize that as a whole, each of the classrooms seemed more energetic, personable, more friendly, relaxed, and colorful (due to the numerous Positive Action materials and art projects). This is mentioned, not as a conclusion, but as an important area for future inquiry.

Figure 1. Photos of Classroom Activity

It seemed that almost all of the comments I received of a summative nature were positive. The feedback which I received which might be considered negative was, in every case, of a formative nature, pointing to very specific aspects of the curriculum the teachers, principals, children, or parents suggested be revised. However, even among those who were the most enthusiastic about the program it was evident that they thought that they were still in the midst of seeing the results emerge. One teacher explained that it was too soon for her to judge whether Positive Action was effective or not. She said that she felt good about the processes or what she referred to as the "intrinsic value" of the program, but that she could not yet judge Positive Action based on a summative criteria. Hence, even though the responses were very positive, it is important to note that it was fairly difficult to see generalizable or thematic trends across the various teacher's, parent's, children's and parents reports of how the program had been effective.

The Socio-Political Context

Summative data alluded to the significance of this project in light of the socio-political issues facing Soviet citizens at this time. For example, one teacher reported,

> "Using Positive has been the only way I have felt like a participant in perestroika. This is what it is supposed to be doing, but we had such a hard time knowing how to actually put it into practice. We have more freedom in our classes now, freedom to say what we think, to question and to know one another, teachers and children alike."

Parents reiterated these sentiments stating that Positive Action was providing a way of talking about values which were important to be discussing in the changing times. One mother explained.

> "With all that is happening, it seems like every day we have a new opportunity to openly discuss significant issues about morals and values. Having Positive Action as a guidepost has really helped."

It was clear to me that the trials of change in the Soviet Union had already touched the lives of many of the parents and teachers as some were quite emotional when talking about their experience with Positive Action in light of perestroika. Some were teary-eyed as they spoke of the opportunities they perceived Positive Action providing their children. Some were visibly excited; children and adults alike wiggling in the seats in excitement as they told about new choices they have made using Positive Action concepts; choices as simple as pointing out someone else's strengths or being willing to admit one's weaknesses.

The mood in both schools was one of anticipation and hope, although also some tentativity because they didn't know what the future would hold for their nation or for this particular project. One deputy principal summarized her thoughts at the end of my visit.

> "I think we haven't even begun to see all that Positive Action can help us do in our school. I suppose there is a possibility that all this excitement could wear off or be squelched. But I don't think that should be our concern at this point. We haven't even begun to see where it can take us. You know, for some of us, this really is the first time as adults we can talk freely about our feelings, and ourselves. When you start talking about these things, you discover all sorts of things you never realized you haven't been saying. Its a huge relief to have a way of expressing this now. Positive Action is helping us do this."

In a separate conversation, a teacher at School B offered a comment which related to the deputy principal's previous summary. With an expression of anticipation and worry she said,

> "I'm not sure if I'm right, but I have sometimes wondered if what we are learning from Positive Action isn't going to be make it more difficult for those of us who have had this chance to continue to live in this society if it continues to be so negative."

In a different conversation another teacher unknowingly offered the beginnings of a possible response to this concern.

> "When you don't have, or think you don't have a lot of freedom in life -- choices about what to think, or feel, or do, or say, or what to have; being able to make choices isn't all that critical. But when you perceive you have more freedom and options, then this virtue [pointing to the happy circle] becomes much more critical. And I think what we are seeing is that even without certain real freedoms, these virtues can enhance our lives and reveal to us some of the freedoms we might not realize we already have. Positive Action doesn't give us freedom. But, I think it offers us a new perception. It helps us recognize freedoms we all have, no matter where we live or in what circumstance."

These comments raise the possibility that the Positive Action collaborative project became a focal point for many of the participants' sentiments, hopes, worries, satisfactions and dissatisfactions about the larger reform issues occurring in the Soviet Union. It was difficult to make a clear distinction between their perception, satisfaction, and anticipations regarding Positive Action and those relating to perestroika. Nevertheless, it was unrefutable that their experience with this program had been very significant in light of the changes which were occurring in their country at that time.

Implications

In this evaluation formative data were some of the most trustworthy data which were yielded. Teachers, administrators, parents, and even children provided in-depth formative feedback about how to improve the program and its use in classrooms. All participants seemed to value being involved in the evaluation process and teachers especially demonstrated the potential for being quite contentious gatherers of both formative and summative data.

Summative data were almost entirely positive. Those summative data which pertained directly to specific elements of the curriculum which were valued by the participants appeared to be the most trustworthy. For example, there was considerable evidence that the Positive Action vocabulary had been acquired by many teachers and children and was perceived as very helpful in changing teacher/child relationships and classroom climate. Data of a more general nature regarding the program (ie. data indicating overall satisfaction or data reporting generalized effects of using the program) were also almost entirely positive, although these data seemed to be less trustworthy due to an obscuring of the evaluand. Throughout the data gathering process, participants (teachers, administrators, parents, and children) referred to the valued presence of the developer of the curriculum, making it very evident that the developer was perceived as a part of the evaluand under consideration. On one hand, these data are useful because they demonstrate the value of personally nurturing relationships with school personnel throughout this type of collaboration. On the other hand, the evaluand could no longer be solely limited to the curriculum, complicating the interpretation and application of formative and summative data.

It was also clear from the onset that this project was occurring in the context of complex educational and socio-political changes. Therefore, it was not surprising that many of the data collected in this evaluation were also suffused with the participants' hopes and opinions associated with the ideologies of the perestroika reforms as they understood them. Throughout the data gathering process participants interchangeably discussed the curriculum and the perestroika reforms to the extent that, once again, it became unclear just what evaluand it was they were offering their perceptions of. Parents, teachers, and

administrators spoke emotionally about their involvement with this project and its relevance to the larger reforms occurring in their country. One parent even stated that their involvement in this project provided them with an opportunity to participate in perestroika in a way they otherwise would not have.

On one hand, these findings may suggest that Positive Action was precisely the program they had needed in order to implement some of the education reforms with which they had been struggling. This was in fact what many of the parents and teachers claimed and remains a strong possibility. However, it is also possible that participation in this evaluation provided a forum through which participants unconsciously transferred their attitudes and opinions about much more expansive reform issues and expressed these specifically with regard to the implementation of Positive Action. A transference of this sort would not be unusual nor would it be that surprising, especially since the perestroika reforms provided both the impetus and context for this collaboration. Such a cloaking of one's opinions, after all, has become somewhat of a social expectation in Soviet culture. The extent to which such a transference occurred, however, is uncertain. Consequently, all data, especially those data which do not pertain to specific elements of the program, must be treated with much more tentativity.

Working out the logistics of collaborations as well as the complexities of implementing an evaluation within the numerous constraints of this setting represented enormous challenges on all sides. Some of the challenges specifically related to evaluation were recognized before the evaluation was even initiated. For example, both sides of the collaboration identified a number of qualifications which would have been ideal for an

evaluator of this project, although they knew it would be difficult to find one person who would possess all of these. First of all, they wanted someone who was a trained evaluator who was familiar with evaluating Positive Action. Familiarity with the evaluand and experience evaluating it was important mainly because time limitations did not allow for a goal free approach. Additionally, they wanted someone with whom they had a rapport and about whom they had confidence could work independently in the Soviet schools (relating with teachers, parents, administrators, and young children) in which the evaluation would be conducted. This was important because it was likely this would be only the first of a number of such evaluations. Those qualifications I had. Additionally, it would have been ideal if the evaluator had expertise in Soviet educational issues (specifically in Soviet educational reform strategies), socio-political change issues in the Soviet Union, the role of education in political change, and fluency in Russian.

Like most small development projects, there were only enough resources for one evaluator. Since it was not very likely they could identify one individual with all of the desired qualifications, the collaborators prioritized the first several qualifications mentioned above and made their selection, hoping that I would somehow be able to compensate for those areas in which I had no expertise or that those areas would not, after all, represent any major problems in the evaluation process.

It was assumed that since the notion of evaluation had been initiated from the American side, and since the American side understood what role an evaluation could play in this process, the main function of the evaluator was to design and conduct the evaluation. Whether this was the most appropriate use of outside evaluation assistance is now

questionable. Certainly there were advantages of having an "external" evaluator (meaning "external" to the actual function of the project) who could function outside of the complex bureaucracy which typifies so many Soviet organizations. However, having an evaluator who was "external" in the sense of not having a personal, contextual understanding of the deep cultural, socio-political, and linguistic elements which had a profound influence on understanding the participants' experience using the program, had implications which cannot be underestimated.

In Beane's (1990) Affect in the curriculum: Toward democracy, dignity, and diversity, he argues for greater attention to cultural and socio-political issues in evaluations of democratization programs. This is especially important in cross-cultural collaborations since those outside of a culture do not have the same tacit understanding of those native to a culture. The problem in this study, as many more will confront when working either in the Soviet Union or in other former east block nations is that there are very few (if any) individuals trained in the use of evaluation techniques which would be useful in these types of projects. Given this need, it appears that one of the best uses of an American evaluator's time and energies in the future would be in the area of training in evaluation and, subsequently, participating as one member in an evaluation team. Rather than single handedly trying to evaluate a program in a context which an outside evaluator is likely not to ever fully appreciate, the evaluation process can become a democratizing process as new skills are developed through a more cooperative arrangement.

As evaluation has evolved through what Guba and Lincoln (1990) have described as the four generations of evaluation, we have moved toward evaluation models which have

become increasingly democratic in function and form. Guba and Lincoln (1990) suggest that the fourth generation of evaluation, which they refer to as hermeneutic because of its interpretative character and dialectic because of the methodologies' emphasis on comparing and contrasting divergent views, has as its aim the reaching of a consensus or group construction of the phenomena under study. The findings of such a study are the result of a democratic process in which the recipients of the findings have actively participated as opposed to an authoritative process in which findings and their implications seem to be handed down to practitioners from "on high". Guba and Lincoln (1990) suggest that the potential consequences of this model of inquiry are: absolutism yields to relativism, accountability yields to shared responsibility, exploitation yields to empowerment, ignorance yields to comprehension and appreciation, and immobilization yields to action; all of which seem to indicate the potential role for evaluation in a democratizing process such as was under way in this project.

Calling for such joint participation in evaluation as an ongoing, emerging, and often unpredictable teaching/learning process, Guba and Lincoln argue:

> Evaluation is a sociopolitical process. ...Far from viewing cultural and political elements as hazards that impede the evaluation effort, fourth generation evaluation recognizes that all human activity - including all forms of inquiry - is bounded and framed by elements of culture and politics (1990, 253).

The extent to which a nation which is quite unfamiliar with the notion of any of the four generations of evaluation is prepared to participate in a fourth generation evaluation is unclear. However, an important aspect of fourth generation evaluation is the preparatory process of examining and creating the conditions for conducting this type of inquiry which,

in and of itself, can be of value. It is possible that in preparing these conditions a fifth generation of evaluation will emerge based on the needs of those who understand the deep contextual issues which should shape the model of evaluation used in countries like the Soviet Union where evaluation is likely to take a unique form.

Thus, one of the most significant implications of this study was the identified need for more collaborative evaluations and for the role of outside evaluation assistance to be focused more on training and facilitating than independent evaluation. At the heart of every aspect of a collaborative project aimed at assisting in the democratization process should be the notion of empowerment. Empowering Soviet scholars in the area of qualitative evaluation will greatly enhance the role evaluation can play in subsequent development efforts in that country.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that Positive Action was perceived, for many reasons (some of which were clearer than others), as a very positive program for teachers, children, administrators, and parents in light of their goals to democratize their educational practices. A number of suggestions for adaptations or improvements were provided by adult and child participants in the study, however, the overall response was very positive. It should be noted, though, that the overall aims of the project might have been even better addressed had the evaluator's energies been used to train and facilitate the conduct of an evaluation by Soviet scholars using a fourth generation evaluation model. Such an approach would enhance the likelihood of understanding the cultural, and socio-political issues which

were impacting both the implementation of the program as well as participants' formative and summative perceptions of the program.

References

Allred, C.G. (1986). Positive Action Kindergarten Teacher's Manual. Positive Action Publishing, Twin Falls, ID.

Allred, K. (1990). The Generative Model of Comprehension and Its Implications for Education, Unpublished document.

Amonashvili, Sh., Volkov, I., Ivanov, I., Il'in, E., Kurkin, E, Lysenkova, S., Nikitin, L., Shatalov, V., & Shchetinin, M. (1989). The methodology of reform: Report on the third meeting of experimental educators in Moscow. Soviet Education, July, 44-77.

Beane, J. (1990). Affect in the Curriculum: Toward, Democracy, Dignity, and Diversity. Teachers College Press: New York.

CPSU Central Committee Plenum. (1989). Decree of the CPSU Central Committee Plenum of February 18, 1988, "On the course of restructuring of secondary and higher education and the party's tasks in carrying it out. Soviet Education, April, 60-84.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). Fourth Generation Evaluation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Jahn, H.R. (1988).Continuity in Soviet Education--Another Gorbachev Hurdle. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society, Atlanta, GA, March.

Kerr, S.T. (1989). Reform in Soviet and American Education: Parallels and Contrasts. Phi Delta Kappan, September, 19-28.

Kon (1989). The psychology of social inertia. Soviet Education, September, 80-105.

Lysenkova, S., Shatalov, V., Volkov, I.,Shchetinin, M., Il'in, E., & Amonashvili, Sh.(1989). Democratization of the individual: Report on the second meeting of experimental teachers. Soviet Education, May, 80-95.

Kochetkov, A.N. (1989). To be a personality, educate a personality. Soviet Education, June, 89-94.

Orlov, A.B. (1989). Problems of restructuring the teacher's psychological-padagogical training. Soviet Education, June, 46-66.

Read, G.H. (1989). Education in the Soviet Union: Has perestroika met its match? Phi Delta Kappan, April, 606-613.

Appendix A

Description of Positive Action

Positive Action is a program for Kindergarten through eighth-grade that is based on the concept that one feels good about oneself when one acts in positive ways and that there are both individual and collective benefits which result. Based on the notion that one's self concept is cognitively determined, Positive Action begins by introducing a metacognitive process to kindergartners which becomes increasingly sophisticated as they progress through the eight grade levels of the curriculum.

The metacognitive process in Positive Action consists of a three phase cycle. First, students and teacher (both are emphasized because Positive Action is intended to promote personal growth for both) learn to cognitively identify personal actions which lead to a positive self-concept. Second, students and teachers are provided with activities and suggestions for how they can behaviorally test what they have identified cognitively. Third, students and teachers evaluate their behaviors by examining their feelings associated with their actions. In the kindergarten curriculum (which was used in this project) this three phase cycle is described as the "Happy Circle" in which one has a positive thought, which leads to a positive action, which leads to a positive feeling, which leads to another positive thought, and so on. Discussing the metacognitive nature of Positive Action, Allred (1990) suggests that if students and teachers "become conscious of the relationship between the positive behavior and the positive feeling, they will be internally motivated to continue to act in that way" (p. 15).

Positive Action's 20-25 minute lessons, which are intended to be used to begin each day, are accompanied by a variety of instructional media, posters, audio cassettes, etc. During the course of the school year, students and teachers progress through logically and thematically building concepts regarding positive actions through the unravelling of a year long story supported by these materials. The seven units of lessons range from the introduction of concepts and vocabulary, games and art projects, to story telling.

After an introductory unit, actions in the physical domain are introduced. Over approximately a five-week period, students and teachers consider a wide variety of actions in this domain (including nutrition, exercise, and hygiene) by repeating the three phase, metacognitive process of the Happy Circle. Actions in the intellectual domain are introduced next as students and teachers proceed through the story and its associated activities and games in order to metacognitively experience positive actions such as problem solving, creative thinking, learning new things, and memory improvement. Finally, the last units and episodes of the on-going story facilitate consideration of positive actions in the emotional domain. These units consist of self-management (including the management of all of one's resources and emotions), getting along with others, self-honesty, and continual self-improvement.

The same scope and sequence serves as the basic structure of the daily lessons from kindergarten through eighth grade. Allred (1990) points out that Positive Action was designed according to a generative model so that as students progress, not only throughout a given year but throughout their school years, they will cycle through these concepts pertaining to

positive actions in the physical, intellectual, and emotional domains literally hundreds of times, applying the concepts to many different situations and at increasing levels of sophistication.

An important feature of the curriculum is the Positive Action vocabulary. A unique vocabulary associated with each of the Positive Action concepts is introduced explicitly and incidentally throughout curriculum. This vocabulary is intended to facilitate the three phase metacognitive process in each of the domains as students, teachers, and others in the school learn to speak about and put into practice the process in similar ways. In addition to the daily lessons, the second component of the curriculum is the school climate program. First, school climate is addressed implicitly in the design of the daily lessons in that all classes, at all grade levels are following the same basic scope and sequence through the concepts, although at different levels of sophistication. Second, the school principal is provided with a set of materials which are intended to bridge the experiences of each class and each grade level using the Positive Action concepts as the common denominator. Additionally, the principal's materials are intended to assist the principal in reaching beyond the classrooms to involve all school staff (including those in the library, lunch room, counselors, and administration) so that everyone in the school is speaking and thinking in the language of Positive Action and participating in various school-wide Positive Action activities. If implemented as it was intended Positive Action serves as a sort of umbrella under which everything in school occurs. The school climate program is intended to enhance both personal development of students and teachers by providing a supportive environment which encourages the application of the principles into every day situations. Additionally, it is intended to create an environment which participants can then use as a model when participating in the creation of other environments (in the home, work place, community, etc.).